Volume 25, No. 07, February 02, 2018

Nation

Waskaganish 350

- Cover-Up
- Funding The Force
- Smoke Signals

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The Order of Canada recognizes the exceptional achievements of outstanding personalities, their remarkable dedication to the community, or their extraordinary contribution to the nation. It is a well-deserved recognition for Dr. Abel Bosum, who for more than 30 years has protected the interests and well-being of the Cree Nation, whether as chief of Oujé-Bougoumou, as a negotiator, and now as Grand Chief of the Grand Council of the Cree (Eeyou Istchee). His significant contribution to improving indigenous rights and living conditions is uncontested and we can only hope that his work continues in this remarkable direction.

On behalf of the Government of Quebec, I congratulate Dr. Abel Bosum on his appointment to the Order of Canada.

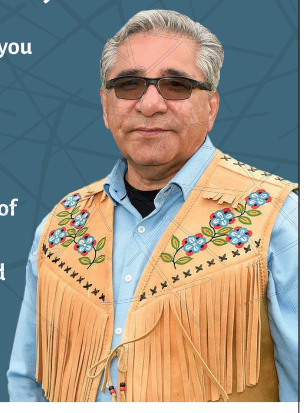
Geoffrey Kelley
Minister responsible for Native Affairs

ENSEMBLE on fait avancer le Québec

Secrétariat aux affaires autochtones
Québec

Congratulations to Grand Chief Dr. Abel Bosum, C.M.

The Board of Directors of the Eenou-Eeyou Community Foundation congratulate Grand Chief Dr. Abel Bosum on his appointment to the Order of Canada. This honour recognizes Abel Bosum's outstanding service to the community of Ouje-Bougoumou and to the people of Eeyou Istchee as a whole. We are proud of Dr. Bosum, who is the founding President of the Eenou-Eeyou Community Foundation.



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Eenou-Eeyou Community Foundation

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February 22. 23. 24 & 25. 2018
Waskaganish, QC

We invite you to come and help us celebrate Waskaganish...
...in all its beauty & wonder!

For more info: Darryl S. Hester, 350th Anniversary Coordinator
Tel.: 819.895.8650 ext.3235 E-Mail: darryl.hester@waskaganish.ca

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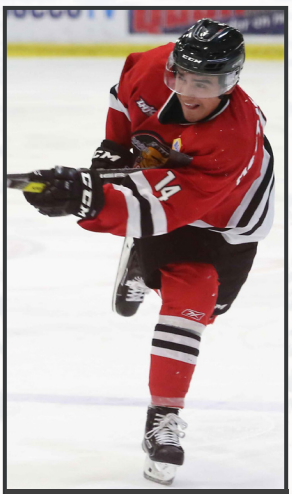

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Photo of
The traditions of peace and sharing live on at Smokey Hill
Photo by
Ian Diamond

Mining **for rights**

by Lyle Stewart

The Cree of Eeyou Istchee are no strangers to the ravages of the Canadian mining industry. Foregone economic opportunity, toxic contamination of land and waterways, and the loss of crucial wildlife habitat were constant elements wherever the mining companies appeared.

The long struggle to build Cree sovereignty over traditional territories changed the relationship. There is now a more equitable sharing of economic benefits, and stronger measures to return industrial sites to their natural state while mitigating environmental damage during the life of a mine.

But Canadian miners continue to abuse, exploit and terrorize Indigenous populations around the world. In Latin America, where Canadian corporations control 50-70% of the mining industry, companies are routinely accused of using arson, rape and murder to force Indigenous people off their ancestral lands.

A lawsuit currently in Ontario Superior Court has put the spotlight on an incident that Indigenous and environmental activists say is all too common in the developing world.

In 2007, hundreds of police, soldiers and mercenaries linked to a Canadian mining company attacked the Indigenous village of Lote Ocho in Guatemala. As the village men were away tending fields, armed marauders repeatedly raped 11 women. One 10-year-old girl was raped 12 times. Days before, the company's private security operatives had burned down dozens of homes in an attempt to force their inhabitants off their lands.

Some of the Mayan women, who were recently in Toronto to testify in court, say the violence is linked to the nearby Fenix nickel mine, one of the largest in Central America, which at the time was owned by a Canadian company.

Other cases link the same company to the 2009 death of a local activist, as well as a shooting that left a 28-year-old man paralysed.

These stories have led the federal government to appoint a Canadian Ombudsperson for Responsible Enterprise (CORE), an independent officer who will investigate allegations of human-rights abuses linked to Canadian corporations operating abroad.

Announced last week, the ombudsman's office will have the power to launch investigations and publicly report their findings.

But, much like the position this new office will replace, the ombudsman will be largely toothless. In 2009, the then-Conservative government appointed a Corporate Social Responsibility Counsellor, who investigated none of the six complaints received during its entire existence because the mining company declined to participate each time.

Likewise, the new ombudsman appointed by Justin Trudeau's Liberal government won't have the power to impose sanctions or penalties. The government will not be bound to follow a report's recommendations, though it may consider cutting the substantial public subsidies companies receive to operate abroad. Emphasis on the word "may".

Unfortunately, the move smacks of another Trudeau PR manoeuvre, much like his vaunted visit to Pikangikum First Nation on January 19 even as his government continues to cover up evidence of residential-school abuses to avoid paying restitution to survivors.

The real solution, as the Cree have demonstrated, is for the Indigenous populations of these lands to gain real power over their territory, and to deal with mining companies on an equal basis.

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Federal **backing**

Photo and Story by Ben Powless

Federal police funding agreement avoids threatened loss of services

In December, First Nations police leaders issued a dire warning: without renewed funding, on-reserve police services would be forced to closed down by April 1.

The First Nations Chiefs of Police Association claimed in a press release that Canada was "creating financial instability that once again is placing all First Nations police services at risk of closure and loss of personnel, while further jeopardizing the safety and security of First Nations citizens."

It appears their warnings worked. On January 10, Public Safety Minister Ralph Goodale announced a $291 million increase in funding and a change to funding agreements.

"The First Nations Policing Program is a critical service that protects the safety of Indigenous Peoples through culturally relevant policing," Goodale said at the announcement.

"This new funding will be ongoing, so communities can count on it for the long term. It's part of our commitment to work together with Indigenous Peoples to make real progress."

Currently, First Nations communities have had to renegotiate their funding agreements every five years with the federal government. The new proposal would see funding commitments ongoing and automatically increased by 2.75% every year to match inflation.

The increased funding will support priorities such as officer safety, police equipment, salaries, and hiring up to 110 additional officers.

This announcement covers 185 agreements, representing nearly 1,300 officers in over 450 First Nations and Inuit communities with a combined population of over 400,000 people.

Administered by Public Safety Canada, the First Nations Policing Program was started in 1991. In Quebec, there are 21 First Nations police forces serving 29 communities. The rest are served by the Surêté du Québec.

Despite the announcement, Eeyou Eenou Police Force Interim Director Lyle Cox was cautious. He also noted that the funding might not be that significant when broken down.

"The way we see it, $291 million for five years, for how many police forces, if you do the math, I don't know what that would be," Cox said.

The Nation did the math. On average, each police force could expect an increase of almost $315,000 per year for this next five-year period.

Cox reiterated the importance of continued funding to First Nations police services. He noted that the Eeyou Eenou Police Force is still negotiating a new agreement.

"Policing isn't something you can buy out of the box. You have to know the culture and the background of community members," he said.

The Eeyou Eenou Police Force began operations in 2011, serving the nine Cree communities and areas of extended jurisdiction.

At the December press conference, Listiguj Councillor Lloyd Alcon said the job that First Nations police do is often more difficult and more intimate than other police, but First Nations police are not taken seriously by other police forces, and don't receive adequate funding.

"We still have a stigma attached, that we're not as good as the provinces and the rest of Canada," he said. "They think we don't have trained or experienced officers."

Taapwaauchaayimiisu
Believe In Yourself

OUR PROGRAM

Taapwaauyimiisu (Believe in youself) program is a resource available for the schools in the three Cree communities, where the pilot project is currently being launched . We offer support to the students' ages 12 to 17 years old who, for various reasons, are temporarily suspended from 3 to 5 days from school.

The expression ***"Believe in yourself"*** is dear to our program as we want to send a strong message of empowerment and self-worth to our youth.

OUR SERVICE SITES

Taapwaauchaayimiisu program in Mistissini has officially moved in their new service site at the Family Resource Centre (Old Youth Centre). Thank you, Cree Nation of Mistissini, for your collaboration in providing space for our youth.

We would also like to thank everyone that attended our open houses in Waskaganish and Chisasibi.

Should you require more information, please contact the coordinator.

Tel: ***(819) 527-0407***

E-mail: ***Byourself@cngov.ca***

Alternative Suspension

Department of Justice and Correctional Services, CNG

Cree School Board

Department of
Justice and Correctional Services

Record Suspension Program

You can apply for a record suspension (pardon) to have your criminal record sealed, which can help you to get a job

You may be eligible if you:

- Were convicted of a criminal offence
- Have completed all the requirements of your sentence and probation
- You have completed the 5 or 10 year waiting period, depending on the nature of the offence

If you are a Cree beneficiary, the Cree Nation Government (CNG) can help you to fill out the record suspension application and if you qualify for financial assistance, the CNG may pay the costs associated with the application.

Need Help on How to Apply?

Contact your Local Community Reintegration Officer:

Chisasibi:	819-855-2120
Eastmain:	819-977-2400
Mistissini:	418-923-2661
Nemaska:	819-673-2400
Ouje-bougoumou:	418-745-2260
Waskaganish:	819-895-2126
Waswanipi:	819-753-2770
Wemindji:	819-978-3300
Whapmagoostui:	819-929-3796

If you have any additional questions or need more information, please contact the Correctional Services Regional Office in Val-d'Or at 819-874-2600 or by email at justice.valdor@cngov.ca

www.creejustice.ca

Photo by Hyman Glustein

uste
our toi
par rue, nous savons comment vous
ir la meilleure connexion Internet qui
hoisissez le forfait parfait pour v
s à prix imbattable.

Communications Equality

by Amy German

New fibre-optic communications bundle coming to Eeyou Istchee this spring

Most communities in Eeyou Istchee will soon have access to a new communications bundle for telephone, TV and internet with the same speeds and prices as in the rest of Canada. A deal reached between the Eeyou Communications Network and Distributel will see a huge improvement in their connectivity service as early as this spring.

ECN has worked for more than a decade to develop the physical infrastructure to make it possible.

According to ECN President Alfred Loon, the agreement will make Distributel responsible for the service aspect of individual subscribers.

"We needed another partner for what you have to go through for the licenses to be able to provide service for TV and media," he said.

Loon noted that they shopped for a service provider willing to agree to prices and service levels comparable to those in southern Canada. While ECN spoke to companies such as Bell and Vidéotron, Distributel made the cut.

According to Loon, ECN didn't bother negotiating with companies that weren't willing to agree to the rate card at the outset.

The advance in communications technology will be a boon for Eeyou Istchee economically and socially, Loon observed.

"With improved communications, people will be able to keep on top of what is happening so they can take action when they need to," he said. "Some people consider it a necessity; some people see it as an expense."

For instance, it will help provide better health care as diabetics will be able to check their blood sugar levels, send them to their clinics and then find out what they are supposed to do with their medication according to the results.

The deal covers every community with the exception of Chisasibi and Whapmagoostui.

The next step for ECN is to come up with a Regional Telecom Plan.

According to Matt Stein, CEO of Distributel, the company is excited to provide this service and believes the partnership with ECN is a good fit.

"There are a lot of reasons as to why this is exciting. We are getting closer to closing the divisional divide. Here in Canada we have lots of urban areas where they have many options, but then there are people who are more difficult to reach who either have poor options or no options, as was the case in northern Quebec," said Stein.

Ouje-Bougoumou Cree Nation

Message of Congratulations to Grand Chief Dr. Abel Bosum

The Ouje-Bougoumou Cree Nation is especially proud to extend its congratulations to our former Chief, our former leader, our inspiration and our community member, Dr. Abel Bosum, on his appointment as a Member of the Order of Canada.

Abel has received this highest recognition for his dedication to his people—in Ouje-Bougoumou and throughout Eeyou Istchee—and for his remarkable contributions to the improvement of the lives of our people and our communities. He has also received this recognition for his contribution to the well-being of the entire region which includes our non-Cree neighbours. He has established a new standard for statesmanship and has contributed to forging a new relationship with the society around us which is based on mutual respect, trust and integrity.

Abel has always been committed to working tirelessly in the service of his people and has always represented our highest ideals and our deepest values.

With our most profound respect and admiration, the entire community of Ouje-Bougoumou congratulates you. Meegwetch.

Alternative Suspension

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A CENTRAL PLACE IN

HISTORY

Celebrating the last 350 years of Waskaganish

by Jesse Staniforth

On September 29, 1668, a small British ship called the Nonsuch anchored in Rupert Bay, at the mouth of the Rupert River. It wasn't the first time Europeans had been there, says historian Dr. Joseph Jolly. Many believe Henry Hudson spent the winter in the region in 1611, before he, his son and some of his crew were abandoned in a small boat by a mutinying crew and left to die in the bay named after him.

That meant some Crees had seen Europeans and their boats before. At the time, the Crees traded widely, all the way down to Georgian Bay in southern Ontario, where some had already met Europeans as well.

Instead, the landing of the Nonsuch in Waskaganish 350 years ago this September was the beginning of a wholesale change for Cree communities on both sides of James Bay. It would lead to an upheaval of their economic and hunting systems, and the beginning of an English colonial presence in what is now called Canada.

Darryl Hester, Waskaganish's 350th Anniversary coordinator, says community celebrations will be staged throughout the year.

"We're mentioning European contact and the first ship that landed here, and a little bit about Hudson's Bay," Hester said. "But the most important thing we're celebrating is our tradition and the culture of the Crees."

Photos by Ian Diamond, Dr. Joseph Jolly & Nation Archives

After all, Hester says, archeologists have found artifacts showing that the Waskaganish area has been inhabited for at least 4,500 years.

"We've been here for a very long time," Hester said. "But the thing we're celebrating is when our community started evolving through trade."

Jolly is the author of the soon-to-be-published book A History of Waskaganish. He said there were plenty of settlements the Crees would return to every summer from their territory on the land. The difference is that Waskaganish was the one that the English expedition decided to give an English name: Rupert House. Named after Prince Rupert, the co-sponsor of the expedition with his cousin King Charles II, this made Waskaganish the first point in the English claim of what it began to call "Rupert's Land," which included all of James Bay and Hudson's Bay, present-day Manitoba, most of Alberta, and significant northern sections of Ontario and Quebec.

Though it was an English ship, the guide for the voyage was a trapper and explorer named Médard des Groseilliers who had heard about the wonders of Cree territory when he traded with Crees in the Great Lakes area.

"The Crees told des Groseilliers [and his partner Pierre-Esprit Radisson] there were a lot of rivers in James Bay, and a big sea – the North Bay, they called it," Jolly explained. "There were rivers stocked with prime beaver pelts. These guys were interested in James Bay, but they didn't want to go by canoe – it would have taken about seven days and it would have been a lot of work."

Instead, des Groseilliers and Radisson looked for a country to sponsor them. Though they were French trappers (coureurs des bois), they weren't popular – the governor of "New France" had confiscated all their furs when he caught them trading without a license. That's why they went to England to ask, and why they left on English ships (Radisson's ship was forced to turn back).

"One of the reasons the Hudson's Bay Company was so successful was that the Crees already had their own trading system. They were going to Georgian Bay [trading moose hides for things like corn and tobacco], probably going to Labrador. They had means of getting around," said Jolly.

"The Nonsuch landed in Waskaganish in 1668 and wintered there. Native people brought their furs to them. In 1669, the ship returned to England. When the British merchants saw the kinds of pelts they brought

"We've been here for a very, very long time, but the thing we're celebrating is when our community ***started evolving through trade"***

- Darryl Hester, Waskaganish's 350th Anniversary Coordinator

back, it didn't take long before Charles II issued a Royal Charter on May 2, 1670, to 'the Governor and Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson Bay.' The governor was Prince Rupert, and that was the beginning of the Hudson's Bay Company."

This made Waskaganish a recorded settlement, to which ships would come from England, and where they could unload their things and trade.

"The Nonsuch launched an empire of trade. That's how big it was," Jolly explained. "Eventually you had Moose Factory in 1673, then the Hudson's Bay Company established ports at the mouths of all the rivers. Chisasibi, Wemindji, Eastmain, Moose Factory, Churchill – all along the coast. The Native people were already there, of course, and they had settlements. But it's like the Hudson River in New York – which was already discovered by Native people long before Hudson appeared. But because of the fact that he recorded it, he gets the credit for 'discovering' the river."

Since that time, said Hester, Waskaganish has held a central place in Cree history. Trappers could easily paddle the Rupert River from Waskaganish to Nemaska, Mistissini and Waswanipi, making it a well-established trading centre.

Meanwhile, struggling with illness and a famine fuelled by low animal population cycles, Waskaganish set up the first animal preserve in Canada. In 1932, Rupert House post manager James Watt took inspiration from Cree hunting approaches that carefully avoided overtrapping of lodges and allowed beavers to breed. Watt paid Robert Stephens and Andrew Whiskeychan to mark a beaver lodge as "his," and protect the beavers in it. Supported by the Quebec government, the beaver preserve was replicated in Nottaway and Old Factory, and helped lead to a ten-fold increase in the beaver population over the next decade.

"That wasn't the first time the Crees had done something like that. They knew what they were doing, and who knows, maybe they did that 2,000 years ago, too," Hester said. "The first male beaver they placed in the preserve, they named George. So we got a male beaver as a mascot and named him George too!"

The first round of celebrations takes place February 22-24. It will include an arts and culture showcase, with snowshoe making and moosehide tanning demonstrations, and displays of old-style Cree clothes. There will be traditional food, as well as games and activities. A marketplace

"One of the reasons the Hudson's Bay Company was so successful was that the Crees already had ***their own trading system"***

Dr. Joseph Jolly, Historian

"There's a lot of history, and I know there's going to be a lot of people coming in from all the Cree communities

- Darryl Hester

will offer moose-hide mittens and moccasins for sale. In the evening, they will have a dance with music ranging from contemporary styles to old-time fiddle music, including songs only Elders will know. Traditional dances, such as the caribou dance, will also be performed.

At each of the seasonal celebrations, there will also be re-enactments of historic events.

Since Waskaganish was home to Billy Diamond, the Grand Chief of the Crees when the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement was signed, Hester says they are planning a re-enactment of this historic event. On a darker note, they will also re-enact the annual trauma of an Indian agent calling out the name of a child to be taken away to residential school.

The spring celebration will be centred around Goose Break, while the summer event will be the largest – the Cree Nation Government has sent an invitation to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. Finally, the fall event will celebrate freeze-up on November 22-24.

"There's a lot of history to celebrate," Hester said. "I know people will be coming in from all the Cree communities, as well as from across Canada."

An excerpt from

The History of Waskaganish

by Dr. Loseph Jolly

The Hudson Bay Company used to appoint a spokesperson to be the leader or chief. That's how Robert Stephen became the leader in the Waskaganish. He was not elected by the people in the 1920s. The first elected chief was Frank Moar in 1946.

The following is a list of names of Chiefs of Waskaganish in chronological order: Robert Stephen, Charles Stephen, Frank Moar, Malcolm Diamond, Isaiah Salt, James Blackned, Billy Diamond, Sidney Georgekish, Samuel Shecapio, Henry Diamond, Bill Namagoose, Simeon Trapper, Robert Weistche, Gordon Blueboy, Steve Diamond, Gordon Blueboy and Darlene Cheechoo.

Note: Billy Diamond was Chief twice. He was elected in 1970 and again in 1988.

Photos from top left to bottom right; The late Air Grechee President Albert Diamond, Grand Chief Billy Diamond with Pope John Paul, Man making Nimostakee, Nation founder, author and film director Niel Diamond, Billy Diamond with Henri Bourassa and Judd Buchanan, Children on the land

Ice PROGRESS

With the NHL All Star break in the books *the Nation* reports on the first half of the **Indigenous hockey season**

by Dan Coyle

Montreal Canadiens goaltender Carey Price was the lone Aboriginal player on the ice as the NHL showcased its biggest stars on All-Star Weekend in Tampa Bay.

It has been a tough campaign for the 30-year-old from Ulkatcho First Nation in British Columbia. Price missed 10 games early in the season while battling fatigue, but has remained one of the few bright spots on a Habs squad that looks bound to miss the postseason for the second time in three years after entering the NHL All-Star Break with a record below .500.

It has been a much more successful campaign for Calgary Flames left winger Micheal Ferland and Anaheim Ducks rookie defenceman Brandon Montour.

A member of the Cree Nation from Swan River, Manitoba, Ferland enjoys a more prominent role with the Flames this season. The 25-year-old played up and down the lineup during the first half, tallying 19 goals and 10 assists in 46 outings.

Ferland's success represents an impressive turnaround after struggling with alcoholism early in his career. He will soon celebrate his fourth year of sobriety, and was rewarded last summer for his persistence and resilience with a two-year, $3.5 million contract.

Montour is a revelation in his first season with the Ducks. Selected 55th overall in the 2014 NHL Draft, the 23-year-old defenceman from the Six Nations of the Grand River has potted six goals and 15 assists through his first 47 NHL contests. He is emerging as the one of the most offensively talented young blueliners in the league.

Another young Aboriginal defenceman making a case for promotion to the NHL is Ethan Bear. He is in his first professional campaign with the Bakersfield Condors, racking up 11 points through 24 contests.

A product of Saskatchewan's Ochapowace First Nation, Bear emerged as a top prospect in the Edmonton Oilers organization after leading the Seattle Thunderbirds to the WHL championship last season while earning honours as the league's top defenceman.

Goaltender Devin Buffalo rounds out the list of budding hockey stars hailing from First Nations in Western Canada. A member of Samson Cree Nation in Hobbema, Alberta, Buffalo impressed in his senior year at Dartmouth University, backstopping the Ivy League squad to a 6-6-1 record, gaining a nomination for the coveted Hobey Baker Award, which honours the top player in US college hockey.

Montour is a revelation in his first season with the Ducks. Selected 55th overall in the 2014 NHL Draft, the 23-year-old defenceman from the Six Nations of the Grand River has potted **six goals and 15 assists** through his first 47 NHL contests

Closer to home, Mistissini's Adam Cheezo is having a breakthrough season with the QMJHL Val-d'Or Foreurs. The 19-year-old has been one of the few bright spots on a struggling Foreurs squad, tallying 34 points through 35 games, just one point shy of the 35 points he amassed in 66 appearances a year ago.

Waswanipi's Silas Mattawashish attended Foreurs training camp along with Cheezo before moving on to the CCHL, where he has racked in 36 points in 46 outings with the Ottawa Junior Senators and Nepean Raiders, including six multi-point performances.

Oujé-Bougoumou's Trevor Cooper is also making steady progress in his first season between the pipes with the Midget AAA Lac St-Louis Lions. The mammoth 6' 8" goaltender owns a 5-7-1 record through his first 13 starts with the Montreal-area squad.

Brandon Wadden has been regularly lighting the lamp in his first season with the Maniwaki Mustangs. The 18-year-old from Waskaganish sits atop the player stats in the fledgling CPJHL, racking up a spectacular 42 goals and 32 assists in just 17 games.

Torture cover-up

Trudeau government continues to hide evidence of abuses at St. Anne's Residential School

by Jesse Staniforth

Survivors of the notorious St. Anne's Residential School in Fort Albany, Ontario, returned to Ottawa demanding justice on January 15.

"No child should ever have to live through the horrors that we did at St. Anne's," survivor Stella Chapman told a press conference. "We still stand together. We are forced to tell our individual stories and be tested over and over again. But the government will not admit the truth about what happened to us as children."

Among many horrors, St. Anne's stands out for its cruelty to children. The electric chair that staff used to torture students is already notorious, but that was only one of the traumas children endured there. MP Charlie Angus says the federal Justice Department has long known about these abuses.

"All this originates with the decision made by the Justice Department to sit on thousands of pages of police and court testimony they had about the abuse at St. Anne's," Angus told *the Nation*. "As per the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement, they were legally obliged to provide what they call 'Evidence Narratives' about the various institutions and what was known of them. With the St. Anne's case, they decided to say there was no documented evidence of abuse, which was false. The government obtained these files in 2004. That resulted in cases being thrown out, survivors not being believed. How many? We do not know. All these hearings were done in private, so there's no record unless people come forth."

Angus notes that among the documents the government has not turned over are the results of a five-year Ontario Provincial Police investigation from the 1990s that identified 180 perpetrators of abuse connected to St. Anne's but resulted in "only about seven people" being charged.

"The federal government went to court to get access to that evidence so they could prepare Canada's defence," Angus said. "The judge at the time said okay, but this should be made available to anyone else who's coming forward to make cases about St. Anne's. It was that decision to sit on the evidence that's caused everything we're dealing with today."

Stella Chapman – who contested this decision in Ontario Superior Court in early January – had her case thrown out in 2012 by the Independent Assessment Process. The IAP said Chapman could not prove staff knew she was being sexually abused by another student.

> *"No child should ever have to live through the horrors that we did at St. Anne's"*
> - *Stella Chapman*

Her case was dismissed roughly two years before a court ordered Ottawa to release documents about a wide variety of sexual and physical abuses both by staff and other students that had been reported by survivors of the school.

"Stella is one of those survivors who came forward and said, 'I had my case thrown out, and they had evidence!'" Angus recounted. He noted that the IAP Chief Adjudicator ultimately chose to reopen Chapman's case, but only because she and a handful of other St. Anne's survivors fought so hard.

The federal government, meanwhile, claimed in the British Columbia Supreme Court that, unlike plaintiffs who make their argument through judicial hearings, survivors do not have a right to "procedural fairness" in the IAP.

Two days after Chapman's Ottawa press conference, BC Superior Court Justice Brenda Brown decided that survivors needed more than just new evidence of abuse if they hoped to continue pursuing cases that had been thrown out. The reasoning, she said, is that procedural fairness "alters the bargain" that survivors and the government of Canada reached in the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement.

Brown ruled that by reopening cases that had been thrown out, "the Chief Adjudicator and his designates have also undermined the finality of the determination of individual IAP claims and potentially extended the IAP's completion far beyond what was contemplated by the settling parties."

To favour finality over justice rankles Angus. "The BC Supreme Court decision is a real slap in the face to survivors," he said. "They want this thing swept under the carpet. I'm sorry, the most important thing here is justice for residential school survivors, and until there's justice for St. Anne's survivors, there's going to be no credible reconciliation in this country. That's the message the government needs to understand."

> *"It shows the **enormous power** of the Justice Department, which has fought Indigenous rights every step of the way, all the time, whether it's fighting a teenage girl getting braces or fighting Cindy Blackstock"*
> - *MP Charlie Angus*

The government agreed not to fight Chapman anymore, Angus said, only because she had gone public with her experience as a sexual abuse survivor. Other survivors have seen the lengths Ottawa will go in fighting the reopening of claims. Angus says that sends a message.

"It shows the enormous power of the Justice Department, which has fought Indigenous rights every step of the way, all the time, whether it's fighting a teenage girl getting braces or fighting Cindy Blackstock," he said.

Hydro-Québec wishes to congratulate Abel Bosum for his appointment to the Order of Canada. His endless dedication to his community, leadership and many contributions to the Cree Nation of Eeyou-Istchee have earned him one of Canada's highest civilian honours.

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Looking for smoke signals

Questions remain as Canada prepares to legalize cannabis

by Ben Powless

In a scene that wouldn't be out of place in a standard action movie, police armed with assault rifles burst into the cannabis dispensary on a calm Tuesday evening and arrested almost everyone inside.

The reserve police in the community of the Six Nations of the Grand River, Ontario, seized cannabis and around $20,000 in cash during the January 9 raid, and charged four people with crimes including possession and trafficking of marijuana.

Aaron Sault is the manager of the dispensary, Green Health for Six. While he wasn't in the shop that evening, many of his friends were, and almost all of them ended up in handcuffs.

It's the second time the shop has been raided.

The first time, said Sault, police told the former administrators that there had been a number of complaints from community members. However, he says that while the police are cracking down on cannabis, which is set to become fully legal this year, they ignore those selling hard drugs.

"We've had a lot of positive feedback to keep going," Sault told *the Nation*. "People are trying to recover from opiates, and we're taking care of them. We have a few patients who stopped taking methadone."

The debate over use and sales is one that many First Nations have begun to consider as the federal government prepares to pass legislation to legalize marijuana.

Some First Nations see an opportunity to create jobs, wealth and education.

Former National Chief Phil Fontaine is the head of a new medical marijuana company called Indigenous Roots. Fontaine said the company will focus on distributing medical marijuana to Indigenous communities.

As part of that business model, Indigenous Roots plans to build a growing facility in Armstrong, BC, where they will hire First Nations employees to run the facility.

In early 2017, a group calling itself the National Indigenous Medical Cannabis Association was founded, advocating for access to medical marijuana.

Other First Nations have signed investment deals with marijuana companies, investing substantial amounts of money for a share of future profits.

In Saskatchewan, three First Nations communities have won licenses to sell cannabis. Already though, other Saskatchewan First Nations communities that weren't approved said they will go ahead and open stores, and challenge the province to stop them.

Other communities, such as the Mohawk community of Tyendinaga in Ontario, decided to sit out the current debate.

With a reported 22 dispensaries opening in the community, the band council issued a statement noting that it had not registered or endorsed any of the dispensaries, and that many were considered illegal.

Since then, Chief Donald Maracle told the CBC that they won't be pursuing any raids in the community, and that the community has little power to stop the proliferation of dispensaries.

Like Six Nations, other communities have taken a stiffer stance against cannabis. The Kahnawake band council issued a moratorium on "the production, distribution and sale of cannabis" until the community can adopt its own policies.

Even then, the band recognized that community members seem to favour community-owned cannabis production.

The lack of consensus on the issue has forced national Indigenous leaders to take action.

Assembly of First Nations chiefs passed a motion in December that requests a delay before introducing legal cannabis to First Nations communities to allow them to carry out consultations and develop drug policies.

It's a discussion that the Cree Nation Government and Eeyou Eenou Police Force is also having.

In an October interview with *the Nation*, Grand Chief Abel Bosum said his government was focused on consulting with the chiefs and councils of all Cree communities, as well as with the Cree Health Board and other levels of government.

He said there should be an effort to educate people, starting with children, on the effects and dangers of cannabis.

Ultimately, Bosum said, it will be an individual's choice, the same as smoking a cigarette.

Eeyou Eenou Police Force Interim Director Lyle Cox said his force will follow best practices among law-enforcement agencies to deal with the new reality.

Cox said he didn't yet know the intentions of band councils towards allowing sales, but that with time their policies would become clear.

"When it comes, we'll have to be ready for it."

With a reported **22 dispensaries** opening in the community, the band council issued a statement noting that it had not registered or endorsed any of the dispensaries, and that **many were considered illegal**

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On behalf of the people and city of Chibougamau, we congratulate Grand Chief Abel Bosum on his induction into the Order of Canada!

- Manon Cyr, Mayor

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Congratulations on receiving the Order of Canada!

Grand Chief Abel Bosum was acknowledged in receiving the Order of Canada for his sustained leadership of and dedication to the Ouje-Bougoumou Cree Nation and the development of Eeyou Istchee.

We offer our congratulations to you Grand Chief Bosum. Meegwetch for your hard work!

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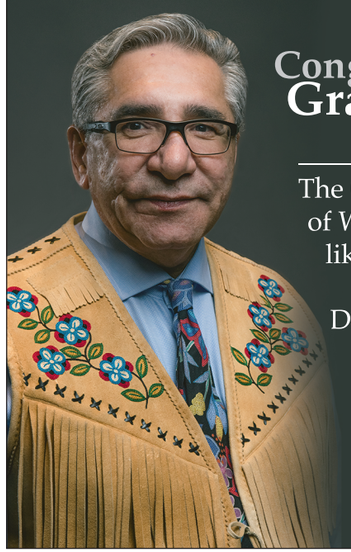

Congratulations Grand Chief Bosum!

The Cree First Nation of Waswanipi would like to congratulate Grand Chief Dr. Abel Bosum on his appointment to the Order of Canada.

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The holiday **hold-up**

by Errol Mianscum

Rez Notes

There's something I've wanted to get off my chest for a while now. I wonder if I'm the only one who thinks there is a conspiracy to empty our bank accounts in a never-ending cycle. Do all these corporate giants sit around discussing what new holiday they can devise to make us spend more of our hard-earned dollars?

Let's start with Valentine's Day. This day, I always thought, was for our other half. But now I see people also buying Valentine's gifts and flowers for their daughters, mothers, grandmothers and so on. Imagine how much those chocolates, flowers, teddy bears add up to. Maybe you have a couple of birthdays after this when you buy gifts, a cake, decorations and sometimes even a place to rent for a party.

In April, we buy tons of chocolate for the "Easter Bunny" that seems to have convinced our children that it can magically produce all these eggs made of chocolate! I'm telling you, whoever made up this holiday was smoking something wacky.

Thanksgiving has us travelling long distances just so we can put on an extra five pounds gorging on the poor turkeys that are sacrificed for our gluttonous pleasures.

Halloween is another crazy time. If your children are like mine, there is always a specific costume that is as "must-have" this year. This searching can get very pricey if you don't find it online right away.

Insert more birthdays.

By this time, the Christmas spending frenzy has started, with multiple shopping trips, hotel accommodations, and visits to Santa to "update" the wish lists. Black Friday and Boxing Day make us lose our minds among frenzied mobs going crazy over all of these supposed "savings."

Mother's Day and Father's Day – nothing to say about these days. These are absolute musts for all of us and worth every dollar and minute spent on them.

But we should consider how many of our days are filled with worrying about what gift to get and where to get it. This is not to mention weddings, anniversary celebrations and family trips. Throw all these together and you're barely surviving. The only people enjoying these "holidays" are the suppliers.

I'm certain there is a secret society filled with retailers, bakers and florists – oh, and don't forget the sentimental card companies. Forget the Illuminati, these guys own us, and may as well have direct access to our bank accounts.

"Hello sir! I've gone ahead and withdrawn $200 for your Valentine's purchases; everything has been prepared for you. Oh yes, and don't forget, you'll be needing more flowers for your wife's birthday in three weeks, we'll be arranging the most beautifully expensive bouquet for you." A slight exaggeration, but it's possible in the near future.

I've joked before that, next year, we're going to rotate these days to every other year. Halloween and Christmas one year and Thanksgiving with Valentine's the next. And then skip one of the kids' birthdays (just kidding!).

Sometimes it just feels like we've just taken a break from all the planning for and participation in a special day when we have to get ready for the next special event. The endless cycle of throwing money at faceless corporations really chaps my lips. They take advantage of special moments and have turned them into an obscene profit-making machine.

Perhaps I'm too focused on the downsides of holiday celebrations and forgetting to enjoy the company around me at these times. We could call it an investment for our memories. I guess in the end it's all worth the time and money we spend to see familiar smiles every once in a while.

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from the Capital Works and Services Department / Housing and ownership in the Cree Nation

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Under the Northern Sky

There is a lot of **work to do**

by Xavier Kataquapit

It's hard to believe that Justin Trudeau became the first sitting Prime Minister to visit a remote community in Nishnawbe Aski territory when he traveled to Pikangikum First Nation January 19. It is not as though Canada was created yesterday, so over all those decades you would have thought that one of our prime ministers could have made that trip.

I must say that myself and many other First Nation people are thrilled that very right wing governments from the past are history at this point. Most of us are thankful that a First Nation-friendly government is in place and has lived up to promises to make life better for us. One of the biggest issues that we Native people have with non-Native government is the fact that they do not understand our culture, our way of life and our present situation and our current troubles. Much of what they know about our lives is second-hand information written in reports, documented in pictures or even presented in videos that mostly are not produced by First Nation people.

We have always felt a double standard in the quality of attention we get for our Native issues and problems. When a major event occurs in this country where Canadians are in harm's way, children are endangered, homes are destroyed or local governments need help to assist hundreds of fellow Canadians, government leaders will step in to help those in need.

The same has not been true for Native people and Native communities. In the past, there has mostly been an indifference by our national government to the problems our communities face. In the past the federal and provincial governments did not come to our aid when we reported that teenagers were dying by the dozens because of suicide. They did not show up to witness thousands of Native people across this country living without clean water, in unsafe homes or in destitute living conditions. The reality until recently is that although Canada promotes itself as progressive, caring and inclusive my people for the most part have been living in poverty and third-world conditions.

He would have shaken their hands and looked **into their eyes**

I think that the result of Trudeau's visit to Pikangikum was to witness first-hand how my people live in the remote north. He would have been able to feel the cold weather, experience the snow, the crisp frozen air and the feeling of remoteness and isolation that is the reality in a northern community. He would have visited our people, the community members, its Elders, the children and the young people who live in these communities. He would have shaken their hands and looked into their eyes.

It was good of him to participate in positive activities like visiting the land, gathering food from a fishing net and experiencing how our people live. It was equally important for him to witness where our people live now. He would have seen many overcrowded houses where large families of relatives live together. He would have noticed the dilapidated housing, the lack of modern facilities and he would have heard first-hand from the people what they struggle with.

It is one thing to talk about these facts of life from the comfort of a modern Canadian city that is far removed from our northern realities. For many southern bureaucrats, office workers, career politicians and government representatives, Native lives in isolated remote communities are just words and images that are seen in reports, news stories or viewed in photos and videos. It is easy to dismiss a harsh negative reality if you are sitting in the comfort of your own world.

The impact is not just to our Prime Minister but also to the political colleagues and assistants who accompanied him. They all took the hands of community members warmly, stared into their eyes and realized that there are promises to keep. I know that it must have occurred to the prime minister and his entourage that their privileged and comfortable lives are in sharp contrast to life on a remote First Nation.

Witnessing the hardships of another person is a difficult thing to dismiss. It's not easy to talk to someone who lives with a lot of loneliness, pain and a sense of hopelessness. Maybe if our government leaders did more of this, they would have a better understanding of what our people have to live with. There is still a lot of work to do.

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Aanischaaukamikw Cree Cultural Institute, its staff and Board of Directors, congratulates Grand Chief Dr. Abel Bosum on his induction into the Order of Canada.

It is with great pride that we celebrate this recognition of his sustained leadership and dedication to the Cree Nation of Ouje-Bougoumou and to the development of Eeyou Istchee.

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